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2 October 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR : DD/ER
THROUGH : Chief, IRA
THROUGH : Chief, D/I
SUBJECT : Recent Reports of Cambodian Support to Vietnamese
Communist Forces

The attached comments are forwarded in response to your request of 1 October 1968. They have been coordinated within OER and with OGI.

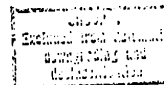
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Attachments(1)

Distribution (S-2836)

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State Department review completed

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
2 October 1968

MEMORANDUM

Recent Reports of Cambodian Support
to Vietnamese Communist Forces

1. A spate of reports appearing within the past few days have again drawn attention to the support derived from Cambodia by Vietnamese Communist forces in South Vietnam.

2. Articles in the New York Times and the Washington Post report a substantial increase over the past year in Vietnamese Communist use of Cambodia as a staging area, refuge and source of supplies including weapons and ammunition. The articles are liberally spiced with recently acquired detailed information attributed to intelligence sources in Saigon on Vietnamese Communist activities in the Ba Thu area of Cambodia's Svay Rieng Province.

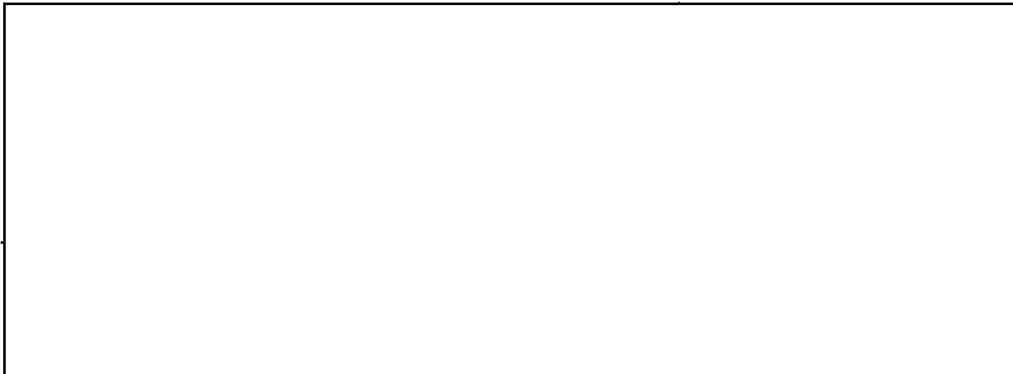
Specifically, the new reports provide further evidence that Communist forces in the III and IV Corps areas of South Vietnam receive an important share of their arms and ammunition via southeastern Cambodia. It is still not clear to what extent these movements originate from Cambodian military stocks, from supplies originating in North Vietnam and infiltrated through Cambodia, or from stocks previously moved from South Vietnam into Cambodia for safe storage.

3. The release of the information to the press at this time appears to reflect the implementation of Ambassador Barker's recent proposal that the U.S. publicize evidence of the flagrant violation of Cambodian territory by the Vietnamese Communists.

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4. Nothing new was contained in an item in the Wall Street Journal of 1 October, in which the head of the North Vietnam delegation to the Paris peace talks credited Cambodia with giving "precious moral and material support to the Viet Cong". The food and medicines specifically cited undoubtedly refer to the token amounts that Sihanouk, in a gesture of support, turned over to the Communists in public ceremonies at Phnom Penh.



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7. Further, the reported call at Sihanoukville in March or April by a Soviet ship carrying arms for North Vietnam does not appear to be factual, and a reference to a U.S. protest against such a call is absolutely false. [redacted] only two Soviet ships visited Sihanoukville in the period January - April of this year. Both arrived in ballast from North Vietnam. The Soviet arms shipment delivered to Sihanoukville on 31 July 1968 was the first detected since September 1966. More to the point, [redacted]

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[redacted] Soviet military deliveries to North Vietnam are shipped by rail through China. We also note that no Soviet ships carrying cargoes to North Vietnam have stopped en route at Sihanoukville since 1966.

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